



## Transportation Maps

### Purpose and History

The first transportation map authorized and printed by the State of Iowa was completed in 1919. The transportation map included the federal aid road system, the county road system, and the township road system. The transportation maps were prepared by the Women's Drafting Department of the Iowa Transportation Commission using various government maps and detailed field information. Prior to this publication, drivers depended on travel guides published by private organizations that used their own maps and numbering systems.

Since this first publication, the State has been involved at various levels of preparing and printing Iowa transportation maps. The tourist-size printed copies of the latest edition of the Iowa Transportation Map are available at the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), driver's license stations, district offices, and rest stop areas. In addition, the DOT provides a portion of the transportation maps to the Iowa Department of Economic Development for distribution to the State's 19 welcome centers, various tourist locations, and travel packets that are available on request. An [electronic version of the transportation map](#), accompanied by an assortment of city detail maps, is also available on the DOT website.

In the late 1990s, websites like MapQuest and Google Maps simplified road trip planning. In the early to mid-2000s, affordable Global Positioning System (GPS) devices and built-in navigation on smartphones transformed individual personal use of transportation maps. As a result, many state transportation agencies around the country have noticed a change in public demand for transportation maps and have resorted to printing fewer maps to cut department expenditures. For example, according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Georgia and Pennsylvania now print 50.0% less transportation maps than they did a decade ago. In addition, they have adopted a two-year printing cycle. Washington discontinued transportation map printing in 2008 due to budget shortfalls, but the state does still compile maps that individuals can view online or print. However, state transportation agencies in Oklahoma, Ohio, Missouri, Connecticut, Mississippi and Nebraska report that transportation map printing has remained comparatively the same over the last decade.

According to the AASHTO, it is unclear why some states are impacted more than other states in the demand for transportation maps, but certain regions could impact the resources people utilize when traveling. For instance, Delaware officials attribute a demand for printed transportation maps to people visiting beach areas and a renewed real-estate interest. In 2011, the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Michigan Department of Transportation released new transportation maps that included a Quick Response (QR) code that can be scanned by cameras on smartphones and mobile devices to access instant real-time traffic information, tourist destinations, photos of destinations, and lists of state and national parks.

### State Funding for Transportation Maps:

The DOT receives a Primary Road Fund (PRF) appropriation to print maps. The number of transportation maps produced by the DOT has been incrementally reduced over the last six fiscal years, from approximately 1.8 million in FY 2008 to approximately 1.5 million in FY 2012. The DOT received a PRF appropriation of \$282,000 each year to print maps for the period of FY 2008 to FY 2012. For FY 2013, the PRF appropriation was reduced to \$90,000.

The current five-year DOT transportation map printing contract requires a minimum of one million maps to be printed, and maintains a flat price per map of \$0.134 on volumes larger than one million. The DOT has stated that the reduction in FY 2013 transportation map funding to \$81,000 will require the number of transportation maps printed to be reduced to 602,000 (at a cost of \$0.134 per map). Therefore, it will be necessary to renegotiate or rebid the contract. In addition, the DOT also stated that smaller print quantities will result in higher costs per map.

The DOT plans to transition from an annual to a two-year map printing/distribution cycle. Annual updates and changes in nonprinted years will be available electronically on the DOT website.

### More Information

Iowa DOT Transportation Map: <http://www.iowadot.gov/iowamap.htm>

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials: <http://www.transportation.org/>

Iowa General Assembly: <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/index.aspx>

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